

69.5.9.10  
T H E

# Necessity of Humiliation:

A

# S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

St. John's CHAPEL, in the City of BATH,

On the 13th of *December*, 1776,

" Being the day appointed by Proclamation for a General  
" Fast and Humiliation before Almighty God, for  
" obtaining Pardon of Our Sins, and for averting those  
" heavy Judgments, which Our manifold Provoca-  
" tions have most justly deserved."

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By the Rev. CHARLES STEUART ECCLES,  
Rector of BIRTS-MORTON, in *Worcestershire*.

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We are Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech  
you by us: We pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled  
unto God. 2 *Cor.* v. 20.

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## P R E F A C E.

URGED by the earnest solicitations of many who heard this Sermon when delivered : relying on their judgment : yet, being conscious of the many defects, all the literary productions from him must necessarily have, the Author sends this forth with diffidence, and hopes the Public will cast a mantle of tenderness over the defects, and endeavour to improve the hints he was enabled, with great weakness, to give on that interestedly solemn occasion.

The Author, convinced of his inequality to the task, avoided entering in to a political discussion. Yet, resting on the express declaration of Holy Writ, “ that all the powers that be, are ordained of God,” he feared not to detect that “ Sibboleth” of defection, but too loudly sounded forth by his unhappy Brethren of *America* : many of whom he had formerly the pleasure of personally



sonally knowing ; being a considerable time amongst them. And, therefore, more interestedly concerned for their present, as well as future happiness ; and tender of pronouncing any harsh judgment upon them ; with them, and with their adherents, he would wish to expostulate, as with men he really loves ; and whose peace, and happiness, truly lie near his heart. Consider how many and how great were the blessings you enjoyed ! Protected by our truly gracious Sovereign, your coasts were free from foreign invasions : Peace, that fairest Child of Heaven, with plenteousness and freedom in her train, sang her sweet carols, wielded her golden sceptre, and dispensed her usual blessings. The yellow harvest crowned your labours, and abundantly filled your garners ; whilst each man, unmolested, enjoyed his God, under his own vine and fig-tree. These were thy blessings, once happy *America* ! But oh, how changed ! instead of the sweet sound of peaceful instruments, the rude crash of inharmonious war is heard ; instead of your garners being filled with plenteousness, and the jocund fields to laugh and sing around, bowing



bowing their heads beneath the reapers, fickle; devastation's black and ghastly train, bending under horrors, stalks through your affrighted land, and wields his iron sceptre. And, alas! are not your harps hung upon the drooping willows? your altars consum'd with fire? and if incense is offered to the Lord, it must be done in haste; the voice of war is near. Is not the contrast truly shocking? Yet shocking as it is, without exaggeration it might be heightened, 'till apathy herself would be forced to drop a tear, and groan with inward anguish.

The Author viewing this dreadful contrast, and anticipating the awful scenes laid open by the already uplifted sword, whose dreadful plowshare has harrowed up the glebe of harmony, dissolving the tenderest ties of nature and of blood, and still brandishes portending universal ruin, requests his Brethren would seriously reflect, were there no ties of gratitude to bind? no bowels of constraining love, with thankfulness to urge you for to succour him, who thus protected you? Alas, where does Honour! where does  
Duty!

Duty! where does Justice! sleep? Rouse, Rouse ye, exert your former attributes, bow unto your gracious Sovereign, the Olive branch he ever holds, and with joy, and sweet forgetfulness of your disobedience, is ready to receive you.



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JOEL. 2 *Chap.* 11, 12, 13, 14.

“ ——— the day of the Lord is great, and very terrible,  
 “ and who can abide it? Therefore also now, faith  
 “ the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart,  
 “ and with fasting, and with weeping, and with  
 “ mourning; and rend your heart, and not your gar-  
 “ ments, and turn unto the LORD your God; for he  
 “ is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great  
 “ kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who  
 “ knoweth, if he will return and repent, and leave  
 “ a blessing behind him ”

---

CAN any thing be more awful! more inte-  
 restedly solemn! than the universal assem-  
 blage of this day? To behold a nation, one of  
 the most potent, the most illustrious in the uni-  
 verse, humbling themselves before the Lord!  
 To hear by command of our Sovereign and  
 Rulers, the “ Trumpet blown in Zion, to sanc-  
 “ tify a Fast, to call a solemn assembly, that the  
 “ Priests, the Ministers of the LORD, should  
 “ weep between the porch and the altar, and  
 “ say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not  
 “ thine heritage to reproach.”\*

How

\* JOEL ii. 17.



How exceedingly awful! what is the language that it speaketh? but, that our sins, as a nation do abound:—this observation would be just, was it occasioned by the insurgence of an open enemy: for it is written in the infallible Records, “that  
 “when a man’s ways please the Lord, He oft  
 “times doth cause his very enemies to be  
 “at peace with him.”\* How much more then, when we are constrained to take up our SAVIOUR’S plaint by the Prophet, and say, “It  
 “was not an open enemy that did this thing,  
 “but those whom we viewed as friends, with  
 “whom we took sweet council, and walked with  
 “to the house of our God.”†

A nation’s strength, and blessing is, the LORD’S keeping it at unity with itself: “a house divided  
 “against itself cannot stand.”‡

How loudly then does it speak His displeasure when the clang of arms that rushes o’er the Atlantic surge, are the dire sounds of BROTHERS’ swords, resisting even to blood! when the deep groans that issue from America’s shore, are the heart-rending pangs of Brothers weltering in their Brothers’ blood, each having given the fatal wound, that summoned them to their lasting home. Such is the case: GOD hath permitted

as

\* PROV. xvi. 17. † PSAL. lv. 12, 14. ‡ MATT. xii. 25.

as it were our brethren, our very flesh and blood, to rise up in open rebellion, tossing their arms aloft, despising the laws, and proudly saying, "we will not have this man to reign over us."\*

How awful is the case "to be in perils amongst false Brethren,"† for "a man to lean against a wall," (thinking to receive thereby refreshment and support) "and a serpent bite him,§" "to rest upon a staff, it breaketh,‡" "and pierceth him to the heart."

THIS is an awful situation. God's judgments are out in the earth. His sword is drawn. His visitations are begun, and they are truly awful. Yet awful as they are, and alarmingly severe, we have reason to fear, if we behold God's dealings with other nations, are but warnings of severer judgments; preludes of more awful visitations: if we do not reap the benefit of these paternal chastisements.

SHALL we view the Egyptian monarch, who held the Israelites in chains, what forbearance

B was

\* LUKE xix. 14. Let no one say this quotation is improper, that it does not respect an earthly King, but the KING of Kings, JESUS. I answer, He that resisteth the power, resisteth the giver of the power, as "he who sweareth by the altar, sweareth by the sanctifier of the altar." MATT. xxiii. 20. "All the powers that be are ordained of God." ROM. xiii. 1.

† 2 COR. xi. 26. § AMOS, v. 19. ‡ 2 KINGS, xviii. 21.

was displayed with respect to him; what long-suffering of our God was manifest; how frequent were his warnings; how did the LORD pursue him, nay feed him as with judgments; 'twas all in vain, "why should he be stricken any more, he will revolt more and more,"\* listless of the warning voice, he continues steadfast in his sins, like the rampant "horse, that rusheth, heedless of his danger, on the thick bosses of the buckler of the enemy,†" till God drowned him and all his host in the depths of the sea.

SHALL we turn our eyes to Babylon, though equally forbore with, and who as long stopped her ears unto the warning voice,—did she escape better? Babylon, that pride of monarchies, that glory of the world! "who said in her heart, I shall be a Lady for ever."‡ "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend on the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."§ But "how art thou fallen," (daughter of the spheres) "thy pomp is brought down to the grave; how art thou cut down, the worm is spread under thee, the worms cover thee,"|| "thou art swept as with the besom of destruction:"¶ and all thy glory taken from thee. NEED

\* ISA. i. 5. † ISA. xlvii. 7. || ISA. xiv. 11.

‡ JOB, xv. 26. § ISA. xlv. 13, 14. ¶ ISA. xiv. 23.



NEED we enumerate the fiery plains of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Tyre and Sydon, and the adjacent cities; whose smoke ascends, and as it rises loudly doth proclaim "Vengeance is mine, " I will repay, saith the Lord."\*

OR need we speak of proud Assyria, who triumphed over her enemies: but now in God's "wrath is trodden under foot upon his mountains."†

OR shall we view Belshazzar, haughty monarch, revelling in his strength, scorning the warning voice, though his enemies besieged his gates. Behold! but, alas! 'tis now too late; he stands aghast at the outstretched hand of God! but instead of turning to the LORD; instead of seeking for instruction from his servants, he sends for his magicians, soothsayers, and astrologers; at length constrained, he sends for Daniel; Daniel arrives, announces the impossible to be averted judgment, declares the causes of it; and lo! that night Darius enters, and proud Belshazzar with his court tumbles to destruction.‡

B 2

SHALL

\* HEB. x. 30.

† ISA. xiv. 25.

‡ DANIEL v. 21, 26, 31. In order to see fully God's long suffering with this nation, read DANIEL 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th Chapters.

SHALL we speak of more universal visitations, the removal of the Lord's candlestick from empires;\* or the universal deluge?

OR shall we read our doom in still more glaring characters; in a still more legible hand-writing? View God's dealings with those who then bore that exalted title, which we whilst disobedient, do vainly call our own; even the "PECULIAR  
"PEOPLE of GOD:"† These, (as *Young* beautifully expresses it) "though woo'd, and awed,  
"blessed, and chastised" continued stubborn still; a stiff-necked generation, that would not be intreated: 'till God sware "in his wrath, they  
"should not enter into his rest."‡

Is this God's mode of acting with nations? and shall we proudly say, we sit secure; nothing shall harm us? How can we say so, and our sins so numerous? Does not iniquity abound? and vice with all her viprous brood, rear her poisonous head, and hiss throughout our streets?  
"Hear now this, O foolish people, and without  
"understanding; which have eyes and see not,  
"which have ears and hear not: Fear ye not  
"me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at  
"my presence, which have placed the sand for  
"the bound of the sea\* by a perpetual decree,  
"that

\* Constantinople and the adjacent empires,

† DEUT. xiv. 2.

‡ PSAL. xcv. 11.

“ that it cannot pass it ; tho’ the waves thereof  
 “ toss themselves, yet they cannot prevail ; tho’  
 “ they roar, yet they cannot pass over it.” “ Je-  
 “ shurem is waxen fat, among my people are  
 “ found wicked men : shall I not visit for these  
 “ things ? saith the Lord : shall not my soul be  
 “ avenged on such a nation as this ?”†

WERE not the Egyptians destroyed in the  
 overwhelming surge : Babylon swept with the  
 besom of destruction : Sodom and her neighbours  
 consumed with the out-poured fiery torrent :  
 Assyria trod as in the wine press of God’s wrath :  
 Belshazzar hurled from his throne : the light of  
 God’s countenance withdrawn from Turkey : the  
 Old

\* Can any thing speak GOD more tremendous in power than  
 this instance, introduced by the Prophet ; which we, by be-  
 ing familiarized to, pass by unheeded ? What ! hath he given  
 power to such apparent insignificant particles of matter, par-  
 ticles that are wafted about, as it were, with every breeze ;  
 particles as they lie, which appear as likely to stem the torrent,  
 as the porous sieve to hold up water. Shall these stand in bat-  
 tle array and stop the haughty waves, tho’ they rage and swell  
 never so mightily ? Yes, the LORD hath said it : He hath  
 given them their commission ; therefore say they to the proud  
 waves, “ hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther.” But this  
 is GOD’s general mode of acting, as the meaner the instru-  
 ment, the greater power is displayed,—thus GOD calls the  
 Palmer worm, the Locust, and other Insects, his “ great army,”  
 JOEL ii. 11. chusing “ weak things to confound the mighty,”  
 1 COR. i. 27.

† JER. v. 21, 22, 26, 29.



Old World, save eight persons, swept from off the face of the earth: Yea, the very people of GOD made a reproach and bye word, a universal scorn, and left without a resting-place by sin? and we not fear? Astonishing hardness! amazing stupidity! Let us compare our sins with their's: are they less in number? of less heinous import? alas! quite the reverse. Did the Egyptians refuse tho' intreated, and grow hardened by the long-suffering of God; did they despise his judgments, and stiffen their necks, against his chastisements; until they drew their just and final judgment upon them? They did it thro' the natural depravity of the human heart; GOD left them to themselves, he with-held his spirit from them—they were blinded by magicians—they had not the scriptures of truth.—But! is it so with us? doth not the LORD the Spirit wrestle with us in the scriptures, in language suited to our capacities? May it not be said of us, as of GOD's nation of old, “was there ever a nation so favoured, so blessed, that had GOD so nigh unto them.”\* He speaks to us in the clear sound of the Gospel in our national Church: Yea in our happy constitution, which preserves it even in the dissenting congregations.† Does he

\* DEUT. iv. 7.

† Let no one think he has a right to contradict this assertion, by pointing out the various Arian, Socinian, Antinomian, and other schismatical conventicles spread over these kingdoms.

he not speak with energy to our hearts, “drawing  
 “us with cords of a man as with bands of love,”\*  
 in the forbearance, gentleness, and long-suffering  
 we daily experience? in our many and great  
 deliverances? in our many temporal blessings?  
 and yet! (“tell it not in Gath, publish it not in  
 “Askelon, lest the daughters of Philistia re-  
 “joice,”†) we are incorrigible: In what can  
 we confide, that thus we resist, and rear our heads,  
 and “stiffen our necks, as with an iron sinew?”‡  
 Does our strength exceed theirs’ who held God’s  
 people seventy years in bondage; but was con-  
 quered by that liquid army, that oft is severed  
 by the feathered Oar? or does it equal that  
 Queen of nations, Babylon? who is become  
 weaker than the grass-hopper; more insignificant  
 than the reptile worm, who crawleth prone, and  
 is ever to make dust her food. Is our strength  
 greater than theirs’ was? Can we resist Jehovah!  
 overcome Omnipotence! or set at nought the  
 Almighty? ridiculous infatuation! astonishing  
 absurdity!

WAS

\* Hos. xi. 4. † 2 SAM. i. 20. ‡ ISA. XLVIII. 4.

doms. Although they do exist, ’tis not the fault of our happy  
 constitution: their existing don’t annihilate, don’t alter the  
 laws. No, they are still the same, and did not mistaken cle-  
 mency with-hold their frowns, these scysmaticks, these deny-  
 ers of the LORD that bought them, would feel their force,  
 and not presume to utter forth their poisonous doctrines.

Was Sodom and her plains deluged with the fiery torrent? then what have we to confide in more than they? are not our sins as numerous; of as deep a dye, "pride, fullness of bread, and "abundance of idleness:"\* with all their other crimes. Does our righteousness exceed their's? Have we more just men in our cities? Alas, quite the reverse! where is there a righteous Lot?—but suppose it did: allow we have many righteous persons: hear the express declaration of Holy Writ, "though Noah, Daniel, and Job, "were there, they should neither deliver sons nor "daughters," the nearest and dearest of their kindred; "they should only deliver their own "souls, saith the Lord."† Yea, 'though even Joshua, whose mighty power with God arrested the course of nature, and prolonged the day; was he in the city, it would be just the same, he should only deliver his own soul.

Hear ye this, ye sons and daughters of pleasure! ye careless of the earth! Assyria is levelled by sin unto the dust; Belsazzar is fallen to the ground; Turkey has lost her candlestick, and covered with heathenish idolatry; the Old world immersed in the overwhelming surge; and the Jews, God's chosen nation, his peculiar people, reprobated; yea, scattered over the earth. Then what can we expect, whose sins are more aggravated;

\*EZEK. xvi. 49.

†EZEK. xiv. 14, 20.



vated ; more heinous than those of these nations ; whose sins brought down the weighty hand of Him upon them, who continues “ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever ?\* ” What they did “ through ignorance,” † we do in the light of the sun ; in direct opposition to our reason : against convictions of conscience, which necessarily must arise in the breast of every one, “ since “ the day spring from on high hath visited us.” ‖

ALAS ! when will ye be wise, ye sons and daughters of folly ? when will ye turn your eyes upward and inward, and catch the fleeting moments as they pass, “ even whilst it is called to-day, before the night comes on ? ” ‡ For behold, “ the day is far spent ; ” that day in which men can only deceive themselves ; “ crying, “ peace, peace, when there is no peace.” § “ The “ night comes on ” when no such works as these, or indeed any other, shall be carried on ; for “ then the Prophets which now prophecy falsely, “ and you love to hear ; which now speak  
C “ smooth

\* HEB. xiii. 8.

† ACTS xvii. 30. Let us consider seriously God’s declaration here, “ the times of this ignorance, God winked at : ” but their cities were burned with fire and otherwise destroyed ; then what can we expect, on whom the clear light of the sun shineth ?

‖ LUKE i. 78.

‡ ROM. xiii. 12.

§ JER. vi. 14.

“ smooth things at your request ;”<sup>\*</sup> shall be forever silent, as the grave. Death, that awfully faithful instructor, shall strip each monster of his borrowed plumes, and then they will rear themselves before ye in all their horridness; more dreadful than the famed hydra. Yes, that night, swifter than the winged wind, or forked lightning, comes on : which shortly shall have its period ; and usher in that tremendous day of the LORD ; which our text declares is very terrible, and on that account, puts this solemn question, “ who can abide it ? ” exhorting us in the most encouraging manner, therefore, to turn to the Lord our God.

THESE words, thus opened, speak the language of this present season, both with respect to the solemnities appointed for this present day, and also the Advent season, which our church is solemnizing. In them we have,

FIRST, An exhortation suited to the present occasion, introduced in the most awful and solemn manner.

“ THE day of the LORD is great, and very terrible, and who can abide it ? Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.” And

SECONDLY,

<sup>\*</sup> JER. V. 31.

SECONDLY, The nature of the abstinence, weeping and mourning, enjoined.

“ REND your heart and not your garments,  
“ and turn unto the LORD your God.” And,

THIRDLY, The reasons given, and they are of such delightful and encouraging import, that one might imagine by a people so immersed in sin, they would universally prevail. “ For He is  
“ gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of  
“ great kindness, and repenteth him of the  
“ evil. Who knoweth if he will return and  
“ repent, and leave a blessing behind him.”

FIRST then, we have an exhortation, suited to the present occasion, introduced in the most awful and solemn manner,—“ The day of the  
“ LORD is great, and very terrible, and who can  
“ abide it!” Who indeed! when “ the very  
“ Heavens shall depart with a great noise: and  
“ be rolled up as a scroll; the earth be re-  
“ moved, rased from her foundations, and  
“ burned with fervent heat:”\* when the sea  
shall boil like oil, and discover her slain: “ when  
“ the moon shall be turned into blood; the sun  
“ gather blackness, and fall from his orbit:†  
C 2 “ when

\* 2 PET. ii. 10.

† ACTS ii. 20.



“ when a fire shall go before him, and it shall  
 “ be very tempestuous round about him;—  
 “ when he shall call to the Heavens from above,  
 “ and to the Earth beneath, that he may judge  
 “ his people.”\* Oh how shall men’s hearts  
 “ fail them for fear, at the great and terrible  
 “ day of the LORD;† when the trumpet shall  
 “ sound, and the dead shall be raised;‡ when  
 “ the awful tribunal shall be set; and the whole  
 “ assembly of Heaven, of Earth, of Hell, be  
 “ congregated to receive their final doom.”

How solemn is the consideration ! How aw-  
 fully important is the thought ! Then shall the  
 books be opened—the faithful registers of all  
 our actions,—then the secrets of the inmost re-  
 cesses of our hearts, that we fondly think shall  
 never be made known, shall then be opened to  
 view of men, of angels, and the whole congre-  
 gate body of all the animate creation !—In  
 vain shall then “ the great men, the rich men,  
 “ the rulers of the earth,” though their faces  
 gather blackness with despair, with shame, and  
 confusion, “ fly unto the moles and to the bats,  
 “ and casting their idols there ;§ in vain shall  
 “ they call upon the rocks to cover them, or  
 “ the mountains to hide them from the presence  
 “ of

\* PSAL. l. 3, 4.

† 1 COR. xv. 52.

‡ LUKE xxi. 26.

§ ISAI. ii. 20.

“ of their God.\* Could they climb up unto  
 “ Heaven;” (was it not rolled up as a scrowl)  
 “ he is there: could they descend into hell,”  
 (was it not filled with burning sulphur uncon-  
 sumed) “ he is there also: could they take the  
 “ wings of the morn, and fly to the uttermost  
 “ parts of the sea,” (did it not boil like oil,  
 casting up her dead as dross, discovering her  
 slain) “ even there also shall they meet him,”†  
 —even there shall they feel the fierceness of his  
 displeasure.

BUT perhaps you reply, these are unnecessary,  
 alarming, unseasonable warnings: What and our  
 sins so great! when our iniquities encompass us  
 as a vesture! Have we reason to think God is  
 not the same to-day, as he was yesterday? Have  
 we thus drank in the sin of Pharoah, that God’s  
 forbearance hardens us? May God open our  
 eyes. Alas, we have long experienced what it  
 is to be in the Laodicean state of the church:  
 then what have we now left us, if we still con-  
 tinue incorrigible? “ but a fearful looking for  
 “ of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall  
 “ devour the adversaries.”||

Do you still reply; shutting your ears unto  
 the warning voice, and putting off the evil day,  
 saying

\* REV. vi. 16. † PSAL. cxxxix. 8, 9, 10. || HEB. x. 27.

saying in your hearts “ to-morrow shall be as  
 “ this day, yea and much more abundant :” \*  
 crying as they did of old, “ Dotard, dreamer, †  
 “ remember the sun was risen upon Zoar, when  
 “ Lot went out of Sodom.” ‡ Do you still  
 resist? “ Has not the cloudy hand §” ap-  
 peared encreasing over the Atlantic wave? Has  
 not its pestilential vapours tainted the hearts of  
 many even in these lands? and do we as a nation  
 still sit secure; not fearing any further visitation?  
 Suppose we do as a nation; suppose it all a  
 dream (although we have no reason to think so)  
 will ye as individuals, allowing the day of the  
 Lord is great, is very terrible, continue to say  
 what is that to us? we have many years yet  
 in store; life, health, and strength, flow vigo-  
 rous in our veins. Alas, vain man! how know-  
 est thou “ what a day may bring forth?” || the  
 very breath you draw may be your bane. There-  
 fore “ let not the strong man glory in his  
 “ strength,” ¶ nor the rich man pride him in his  
 riches: for as a “ moth fretteth a garment, shall  
 “ they be consumed.” \*\* —Behold, behold, the  
 day of the Lord is great, and very terrible;  
 and who may abide it? and “ it cometh in a  
 “ day and hour, that we look not for, even as  
 the

\* ISA I. lvi. 12.

† GEN. xxxvii. 19.

‡ GEN. xix. 23.

§ I KINGS xviii. 44. || PROV. xxvii. 1.

¶ PSAL. xxxiii. 16.

\*\* ISA I. l. 9.



“ the lightening that shineth from the east unto  
 “ the west it cometh ; as a thief in the dead of  
 “ night, when stillness reigns, and all things  
 “ hushed in silent sleep, and all the faculties of  
 “ watchfulness are lulled in soft forgetfulness ;  
 “ thus shall it come upon us.”\* Is it not so ?

Does not each man behold the lengthening shadows of his neighbour’s evening sun ; but neglects his still longer ones ? Alas, how soon, in the common course of nature, shall we all be summoned before our Maker, “ to answer for  
 “ the deeds done in this body, whether they  
 “ be good or evil.”† Yes, soon shall the youthful pulse forget to beat ; the sinewy arm to use its strength ; the ear be charmed with melody, or the tuneful voice be heard,—soon will the cold, the icy hand of death, freeze the young blood ; unnerve the sinewy arm ; and “ stop the  
 “ ear even to the voice of the charmer, let him  
 “ charm never so wisely.”‡ “ Oh that ye were  
 “ wise, that ye would consider this, that you  
 “ would remember your latter end,”§ for the day of the LORD is great, and very terrible, and who can abide it. Permit me therefore to press this necessary exhortation, seeing the day of the Lord is at hand. Turn ye therefore unto the LORD your God. Is it replied when ?  
 “ even

\* MATT. xxiv. 27. and 1 THESS. v. 2.

† 2 COR. v. 10, ‡ PSAL. lviii. 5. § DEUT. xxxii. 29.

“ even NOW faith the LORD.” “ NOW is  
 “ the accepted time, NOW is the day of salva-  
 “ tion.\* Even NOW, “ whilst it is called to-  
 “ day.” NOW, whilst the door of mercy is  
 open; and forbearance continued. NOW,  
 whilst there is hope : whilst thou art on praying  
 ground ; whilst there is an “ high Priest,” who  
 can be touched with a “ feeling of your infir-  
 “ mities, and can plead ; can prevailingly in-  
 “ tercede for you.”†

BUT perhaps you reply, is not our appearing  
 here a sure indication of our having turned to  
 the LORD with fasting and with weeping, and  
 with mourning? Yes, the law of Love, of  
 Charity, constrains us to hope these good things  
 of you : But our office obliges us “ to be faith-  
 “ ful ;”‡ to fear the worst ; to call on you “ to  
 “ examine yourselves :”§ therefore bear with me  
 in meekness ; as with one who truly wishes your  
 happiness. Thou hast turned to the LORD your  
 God, with fasting. But hast thou fasted from  
 sin? Have ye put from ye “ that sin that most  
 “ easily besets ye.”|| “ Are not the wages of  
 “ iniquity in thine hands.”¶ “ Have ye deter-  
 “ mined to forsake all your evil courses, to turn  
 “ from

\* 2 COR. vi. 2.

† HEB. iv. 15.

‡ EZEK. xxxiv. 10.

§ 2 COR. xiii. 5.

|| HEB. xii. 1.

¶ ROM. vi. 23.

“ from all your wickedness,\*” and turn with all your heart unto the LORD, “ who is a Spirit, “ and must be worshipped in spirit and in “ truth,”† who saith, “ I will not give my glory “ to another;”‡ therefore “ my son,” (my daughter) “ give me thine heart.”§

ALAS! may it not be justly said of us as in the days of old, “ Behold in the day of your fast, “ you find pleasure,|| and exact all your labours; “ ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make “ your voice to be heard on high. Is it “ such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a “ man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his “ head as a bull-rush, and to spread sack-cloth “ and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, “ an acceptable day to the LORD? Is not this “ the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands “ of wickedness,”¶ which brings me naturally to shew,

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SECONDLY,

\* EZEK. xviii. 27. † JOHN iv. 24.

‡ ISA I. xlii. 8.

§ PROV. xxiii. 26.

|| Is not this the case? would not our fast days more properly be called Feast days! Instead of mortifying ourselves with abstinence, are not our boards spread with every dainty, that luxury can gather from the scaly tribe or vegetable creation?

¶ ISA I. lviii. 3, 4, 5, 6.



SECONDLY, The nature of the abstinence, weeping, and mourning enjoined—" Rend your heart and not your garments, and turn, &c." And have we thus turned to the LORD with broken, with humble, and contrite hearts? Are we bowed down under a just sense of our own, and the nation's sins? or have we only come in the exterior ceremonies represented in our text, by rending our garments; even abstaining from food; of appearing to be humbled by the bending of the knee, and by putting on a sorrowful appearance, and joining with your voices in the solemn services of the day.—Alas! is this the fast the LORD hath chosen? Is it not a solemn mockery of him? "Shall he who made the ear not hear? shall he who formed the eye, not see?"\* and shall not such solemn mockeries of God, "approaching him with our lips when "our hearts are far from him,"† hasten our impending danger?

CONSIDER seriously, is it possible that the mere form, the ceremony of abstaining from meats and drinks, and joining with your lips, the prayers for the day, can reconcile us unto God? "Shall a man give the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul?"‡ No, by no means. Fasting and praying, are very well in their place; nay, are

\* PSAL. xciv. 9.

† MATT. xv. 8.

‡ MIC. vi. 7.

are absolutely necessary, but “they will not put away our sins, nor endure the severity of God’s judgment:”\* they are exceeding necessary, the one “to keep our bodies in subjection,”† left like pampered Sodom, we should be full of pride and idleness: the other, to keep up communion with our God; to spread our grievances before him, and keep our graces alive; to intercede for our deluded brethren, that God would stop them by conversion as he did Saul of old; that peace again might be restored; that with one heart and one voice we might love and fear God, love and honour the King. But one thing is still needful: though we have fasted and mourned; though we have acknowledged our transgressions, and bent our knees and hearts in prayer; though we have put away the Achans and Delilahs from amongst us, and wrestled with God for the conversion and forgiveness of our brethren;—yet this will be but as sounding brass, as a tinkling symbol, in the ears of the LORD; yea it will be “doing despite to the Spirit of his grace, a trampling on the blood of the Covenant,”‡ if we do not turn to the “LORD as our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Sanctification, and Redemption;”§ “as our God;”||

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as

\* See the twelfth article of our Church. † 1 COR. ix. 27.

‡ HEB. x. 29. § 1 COR. i. 30. || ROM. ix. 5.

“ as our hope;” ¶ “ the only way;”\* yea, as “ the  
 “ only name given unto men whereby they can  
 “ escape the just judgment of God, and obtain  
 “ salvation.” †

’Tis not a partial turning that will avail us,  
 or avert the just judgment that awaits our sins.—  
 We must serve the LORD with all our heart,  
 with all our soul, and with all our strength;  
 “ accepted in the beloved,” ‡ the “ fruits of the  
 “ Spirit must dwell in us richly :§ so shining  
 “ before men that they may see our good works  
 “ and glorify our father,|| whose loving chil-  
 “ dren we approve ourselves, only by keeping  
 “ his commandments.” \*\* Oh then let us as  
 individuals, resolve to lay down the weapons of  
 our warfare, and turn to the LORD our God,  
 who is gracious and merciful : which reminds  
 me of my third particular, viz.

THIRDLY, to shew the encouraging reasons  
 given for exhorting us to turn to the LORD our  
 God,—“ For he is gracious and merciful”——  
 Transporting declaration! unfathomable love!  
 This is the astonishment of Heaven! the won-  
 der of time! the adoration of eternity! for Oh,  
 Eternity’s too short to praise Thee, thou inex-  
 haustible

¶ ACTS, xxviii. 20. \* JOHN xiv. 6. † ACTS iv. 12.

‡ EPH. i. 6. § COL. iii. 16.

|| MATT. v. 16. \*\* JOHN xiv. 15, 23.



haustible Fount, from whence all our blessings flow. He is gracious ! miracle of Love. He is gracious ! and to whom ? To those who had obeyed him ? No ! To those who had walked with him in the paths of duty ? No ! but unto those who had rebelled against him ; those whom he now exhorts to turn unto him. Astonishing condescension ! Hear it ye Heavens ! and give ear, O Earth ! break forth into singing ye forests and every tree ; burst forth into universal songs of everlasting praise. For the LORD proclaimeth, “ he is gracious and merciful, slow to “ anger, and of great kindness ;” for “ mercy “ and truth are met together, righteousness and “ peace have kissed each other.\*”

How lovely is the voice that speaketh peace ! How sweet unto the soul surrounded with affliction, to behold one ray of hope ! a voice like this, would make (if it were possible) the deaf adder lend an ear, and the hoarse thunder, and the lightening’s flash, clad in this garb, would be robbed of all their terrors, and like the odoriferous breeze that passeth over Arabia’s ambrosial and aromatic forests, each stronger gust would bring encreasing sweetness.

He is gracious and merciful, “ God can be “ just, and yet, the justifier of the ungodly.”† Does any ask, How can these things be ? I answer,

\* PSAL. lxxxv. 10.

† ROM. iv. 5.

answer, Have men rebelled against God and become obnoxious to the penal sanction of the law, that saith "if thou do this, thou shalt live, and  
 "if thou dost not do it, thou shalt surely die;  
 "for cursed is every one that continueth not  
 "in all things that are written in the book  
 "of the law to do them,\* are they without  
 "strength? God hath laid help upon one that is  
 "mighty,† who became sin for us" (even he who alone amongst the sons of men) "knew no  
 "sin, that we might be made the righteousness  
 "of God in him:‡ the Lord hath laid on him  
 "the iniquity of us all:§ so that he bore our sins  
 "in his own body on the accursed tree,|| and  
 "thus hath redeemed us from the curse of the  
 "law, by being made a curse for us,"¶ agreeable to that declaration in our excellent Communion Service, which saith, "he there made (by  
 "his one oblation of himself once offered) a full,  
 "perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and  
 "satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

'Tis thus alone God can be gracious (humanly speaking) and merciful to fallen man! 'twas only Christ, in whom God and man were fully united, could satisfy the offended law, and fulfill its precepts, and this he hath so fully done, that the Prophet Isaiah declares "he hath magnified the  
 "law and made it honourable: God is well pleased  
 "for his righteousness sake."\*\*\* COME

\* GAL. iii. 10. † PSAL. lxxxix. 19. ‡ 2 COR. v. 21.  
 § ISAI. liii. 6. || 1 PET. ii. 24. ¶ GAL. iii. 13. \*\*\* ISAI. xlii. 21.

COME therefore my beloved ; ye have heard how God can be gracious and merciful, harmonizing all his attributes : turn ye therefore unto him who is the “ repairer of the breach :\*” fear not though your “ sins are as scarlet, though “ they be red like crimson;”† tho’ the law pursueth like “ the revenger of blood;”‡ here is a “ city of refuge,§” which is as a “ hiding place “ from the wind” of God’s wrath that kindleth Tophet “ as a covert from the tempest,” (that shall sweep off the rebellious “ as a shadow of “ a great rock in a weary land,”|| in which you shall be refreshed, and be reinstated in your former strength. Turn ye, turn ye “ to the strong “ holds, ye prisoners of hope,¶ look unto the “ hills from whence cometh your help,\*\* to that “ rock that is higher than you;|||” for he is gracious and merciful, who knoweth but he may turn and repent him of the evil our sins justly deserve to be inflicted upon them ; who knoweth but that he may not only repent him, but turn and leave a blessing behind him, even the blessing of peace ? which is devoutly to be wished, may soon be given, that once more we may meet as brethren, bowing with joy unto the sceptre of our rightful sovereign, and singing Hallelujahs for such a gracious protector. I SHALL

\* ISAS. lviii. 12.

† NUMBERS xxxv. 27.

‡ ISAI. xxxii. 2.

\*\* PSAL. cxxi. 1.

† ISAI. i. 18.

§ NUMB. xxxv.

¶ ZECH. ix. 12.

||| PSAL. lxi. 2.



I SHALL not detain you longer than by making use of the Second Lesson for this Morning Service, as a parable to encourage you to wait on the LORD for the wished-for blessing ; and may GOD give us the wisdom of the just to make a proper use of it.

“ Now it came to pass on a certain day, that  
 “ He (JESUS) went into a ship with his disciples ;  
 “ and he said unto them, Let us go over unto  
 “ the other side of the lake ; and they launched  
 “ forth. But as they sailed, he fell asleep,  
 “ and there came down a storm of wind upon the  
 “ lake, and they were filled with water, and were  
 “ in jeopardy. And they came to him, and  
 “ awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish.  
 “ Then he arose, and rebuked the wind, and the  
 “ raging of the water ; and they ceased, and  
 “ there was a calm. And he said unto them,  
 “ Where is your faith ? And they being afraid  
 “ wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this ? for he commandeth even  
 “ the winds and the water, and they obey him.”\*

Now unto him who killeth, and maketh alive, even GOD our SAVIOUR, with the FATHER and the SPIRIT, be ascribed, as is due, equal honour, glory, and praise, now and for ever. *Amen.*

\* LUKE viii. 22, 23, 24, 25.

F I N I S.



